

E 664

.V2 G7

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 013 787 944 A

permalife®
pH 8.5

Col. Robert T. Van Horn

His Life and Public Service.

AN ADDRESS

Delivered Before the Greenwood Club of Kansas City, Mo.

March 10th, 1905.

BY
James M. Greenwood
J. M. GREENWOOD.

17 Feb 45
E 664
V2 G7

Col. Robert T. Van Horn.

An address, delivered before the Greenwood Club of Kansas City, Mo., on the Life and Public Service of Colonel Robert Thompson Van Horn, March 10, 1905, by J. M. Greenwood.

Ladies and Gentlemen:

My apology for presenting a sketch of the life, the public service and the private virtues of Colonel Robert Thompson Van Horn, while he is still living among us, enjoying excellent health, and contemplating the weightiest problems that ever occupied the thoughts of man, is that we may the more fully appreciate a type of manhood that made it possible for the people of this country to enjoy in the fullest measure the richness of this life which is their inheritance. In the writer's opinion, it is poor consolation to bestow all the praise on a benefactor of his race, after he has passed to that realm where praise and blame fall alike unheeded. It is, therefore, my pleasant duty this evening to sketch a picture of a life not yet ended, and to give tone and color to it, of one who, for more than forty years, stood as the embodiment of that kind of energy which has made the name of Kansas City a synonym for enterprise intelligently and honestly directed, in all sections of the United States.

Already you ask, what of the man? How was he trained? What subtle influence of home life wrought a character that grew from childhood to manhood, from manhood to honored age, and now is revered by all who ever knew him in public or private life. In what school did he study and equip himself for the manifold duties that devolved upon him, and marked him as the moving spirit among a coterie of men of remarkable practical sagacity, in knowing how to seize upon opportunities that would command and hold the avenues of commerce from the Lakes to Galveston, and to determine in advance what should be the

gateway between the Mississippi Valley and the Pacific? In brief, the idea of "about facing" the American people from the rising to the setting sun. Here again, did the circumstances make the man, or did he mould and control the forces that lay dormant when he came upon the scene of action? To all of these inquiries, the sequel will show that one living here saw far in advance, how manifest destiny would move resistlessly westward.

ANCESTRY AND EARLY LIFE.

Robert Thompson Van Horn was born in East Mahoning, Indiana County, Pennsylvania, May 19, 1824. His ancestors were from Holland and came to this country more than two hundred and sixty years ago, and settled at New Amsterdam, in 1645. One of the descendants settled at Communipaw in New Jersey, in 1711, and from this branch of the family, the subject of this sketch is descended. His greatgrandfather, Henry Van Horn, was a captain of a company of Pennsylvania troops in the Revolutionary Army, and died in the service, while his son, Isaiah, served in the same company to the end of the war. Isaiah had a son, Henry Van Horn, who was a soldier in the war of 1812, and his wife was Elizabeth Thompson, who, when a child, came with her parents from Ireland to America.

Their son, Robert Thompson Van Horn, was reared on the paternal farm. His first work on the farm as a small boy, consisted in picking up stones in the meadow and putting them into piles, or heaping them in fence corners, cutting and piling brush, pulling weeds in the garden, raking hay, feeding chickens, churning, turning a grindstone, and going to mill on horseback. In the winter time, he went to the subscription school, studying spelling, reading, writing and arithmetic, but not grammar, because it was not then taught in the schools of that section of Pennsylvania.

At the age of fifteen he was apprenticed to learn the printing business in the office of the Indiana, Pennsylvania Register, where he worked for four years. From 1843 to 1855, he worked as a journeyman printer in Pennsylvania, New York, Ohio and Indiana—much of the time varying his occupation by boating for a time on the Erie Canal, teaching school occasionally during the winter months, sometimes publishing and editing a newspaper, and two seasons he was engaged in steamboating on the Ohio, Wabash and Mississippi, as he found employment. For a time he also acted as clerk on a river steamer, and when he came to Kansas City, he was called "Captain," which title he bore till the Civil War. During this storm and stress period of

his life, he studied law in the office of Hon. T. A. Plants, Meigs County, Ohio, with whom he was engaged in the practice of law for a short time. Twenty years later, they were both members of Congress together.

During his residence in Meigs County, he married Miss Adela H. Cooley, fifty-seven years ago, at Pomeroy, Ohio. At the time of their marriage, he was the editor and proprietor of a newspaper published there.

To give a proper setting to all these varied experiences through which he passed, it is necessary to pause a moment, and to glance at the preparation he had received educationally to play the part in life in which he was destined to become a most conspicuous actor. A sentence or two will suffice. A friend visiting the Colonel and Mrs. Van Horn at their pleasant country home only a few years ago, complimented the Colonel on his wide and scholarly reading and the firm grasp he had on scientific and philosophic subjects, and his comprehensive knowledge of public men and national affairs. Without replying, he went to a library shelf and brought back three small books,—a *United States Spelling Book*, *Introduction to the English Reader*, and an *Old Arithmetic*,—“*The Western Calculator*,” published in 1819, written by J. Stockton: “These,” said the Colonel, “were the sources of my information. I studied them in the winter when the weather was too bad to work out doors.” His ethical training consisted chiefly in the Shorter Catechism of the Presbyterian Church, of which his grandfather, father, and a brother were elders. A mother’s influence had no little to do in shaping the active virtues of his life as one reads between the lines.

LOOKING AT KANSAS CITY AND A SURPRISE.

How well his contact with different types of men with whom he had mingled, had prepared him as a torch-bearer for the forefront of this Western procession, is not now a question of speculation, but one of deeds accomplished. By accident, in the summer of 1855, being temporarily in St. Louis, he met a gentleman from Kansas City who was on the lookout for a printer to take charge of a small weekly paper, “*The Enterprise*,” that had been launched in Kansas City a few months before and was then on the point of suspension. “*The Enterprise*” was owned by an association of citizens who hired an editor and printers to publish it. So, taking a river steamer, he arrived in Kansas City July 31, 1855. The town was then a mere straggling village. He came to look over the situation. Being cordially greeted by the citizens, he was delighted with their hospitality. After talking the matter over, and listening to the glowing re-

ports the citizens gave of the country and its possibilities, he caught somewhat of their spirit and agreed to purchase "The Enterprise" for \$500, by paying \$250 cash on the first of October, and giving them a note for \$250, due twelve months later. He returned immediately to Ohio to get ready to move to Kansas City. Sure enough, on the first day of October, he was here with Mrs. Van Horn and their three little children. He came in compliance with the conditions of the verbal contract made in the summer. He called at once at the business place of Jesse Riddlebarger, one of the gentlemen who had been authorized to sell the paper, and he informed Mr. Riddlebarger that he was ready to take possession of the office. I quote Mr. Van Horn's own words concerning this meeting and the transfer of the paper: "He seemed surprised and frankly told me that he was very glad to see me, as he had not expected to do so, and was waiting till that day simply to keep his own word. To my inquiry why he was so surprised, he said that everybody had said that he was a fool for taking the word of an utter stranger and keeping others from buying. But as he had never said anything about it before, he was mighty glad I had come to take it. He gave me a receipt for the first payment, took my note for the other, and walking back with me a block from Delaware to Main Street on the Levee, put me in possession of the office and paper. But at the end of the year came my surprise. On my calling to pay the note when due, it was handed to me receipted—"by valuable service"—and so it was that the actual price paid was \$250."

BEGINNING IN KANSAS CITY.

Kansas City was then a village of 457 persons, and the next summer, according to an item in the *Journal*, the total population was 478. At this date there was very little of the town above the Levee. The business part was along the Levee, and the stores were brick and frame, none over two stories high. There was no formal society. Everybody kept open house and all were neighborly. There was not a carriage in town, and only one hack. No cards of invitation were issued then, but—"we want you and your family to come over this evening," was the usual form. There was not a graded street south of the river bluff—just a country road from the steamboat landing to Westport.

"The Enterprise," on its first anniversary, was changed to "The Kansas City Journal." It was a four-page, six-column weekly, and developed into a daily paper in June, 1858. The office was in the second floor of a building at the corner of Main Street and the Levee. Within the four walls of this one room,

the editor and proprietor wrote the editorials, setting up the type, secured and made contracts for advertising, and worked the hand press in doing the job work and running off the paper. Thus his experience of four years in a Pennsylvania printing office, was the best school possible for the work he was now engaged in.

In 1855-56, Colonel and Mrs. Van Horn lived in the second story of a brick building at the corner of Walnut Street and the Levee, over John Bauerlein's store. After this they moved into a log house on the hill at the corner of Third and Delaware. This new home had one room and a "lean to" for a kitchen. In 1857, a new addition to the town was laid out between Main Street and Grand Avenue, bounded on the north by Eleventh Street and on the south by Twelfth Street. On the east side of Walnut Street, between Eleventh and Twelfth, a lot fifty feet wide was bought, and a small brick house erected on it, and this remained their home for thirty years. In 1856, the year after Colonel Van Horn came to Kansas City, an association was organized under the name and title of the Kansas City Association for Public Improvement, and of which he was an original member, and this organization later became the Chamber of Commerce.

THE KANSAS CITY JOURNAL AS A MINE OF INFORMATION.

The writer spent three days in the Library room of the Kansas City Journal, in looking carefully through the old files of the early editions, in order to form an opinion of the editor's range of vision and his grasp on local and national issues prior to 1861. The early history of Kansas City and this western country is there and from this mine of historical information, the full history of Kansas City will yet be written. An extract or two in this connection will give a better picture of the condition of affairs and the thoughts of the editor than any words of mine can express.

EDITORIAL ANNOUNCEMENT ON TUESDAY, JUNE 15, 1858, VOL. I
NO. I.

"Kansas City Western Journal of Commerce is before the public this morning, and we ask a comparison between it and any other daily journal in the west. Look at its clean, neat face, its ample columns filled with "live business," advertisements sparkling with news, local intelligence and general reading. We say it is the largest, neatest, best got up, and most readable daily journal that has seen the light in the valley of the Missouri. Look at its plan, the original matter, markets,

port lists, etc., and then imagine how long it would take you to get up such a paper and see how you would like to do it for *fifteen cents* a week. It is said that printers live on air, and we think these figures come pretty nearly to that description of rations."

"When solicited to start a daily, we told our citizens that it would require a heavy outlay, constant labor and toil, to publish a good one, and we had no idea of hazarding our reputation as newspaper men by running out any other. We have redeemed our promise, now we call upon the solid men, the bone and the sinew of this young metropolis, to redeem theirs. Every morning we will send you the news embracing 'The very age and body of the times,' that you may sip your Java over the night toil of the poor typo, while you are in the arms of Morpheus or of your wives, is straining his eyes and keeping midnight vigils for your amusement and edification. Printers, like the dews of Heaven, are casting over the earth their beneficent influences when the world is asleep—and a cheerful morning salutation from every one is all they ask in between, and we know the generosity of Kansas City will not deny it to them in this instance."

Two days later a short editorial entitled, "*How is This?*" speaks for itself:

"Since we commenced publishing a daily newspaper, and began to look around us with more circumspection for locals, city news, etc., we find that a great reformation has taken place; nobody fighting, no runaway horses, no circus, no theater, no dance on the boats, Officer Barnes arrests no one, no accidents, or fighting of any description.

"We say, again, how is this? Must we let our own horses run away, or get into a row ourselves, in order to make a spicy local for those who find nothing interesting in the Journal?"

Through the columns of the Journal, the mind of the editor is everywhere manifest in the editorials written and they are almost as applicable today to the needs of Kansas City as they were then. Not only was the "Overland Trade" with the South-west and westward to the Pacific to be extended with the ultimate object of reaching China, Japan and India, but the trade of the Western coast of South America and Mexico must be secured to make a great city. Editorial after editorial urged the establishment of manufactories for making furniture, agricultural implements, wagons and carriages, and a paper mill, too, was greatly needed. The hills must be cut down, the streets graded; committees should be organized to devise ways and

means for establishing good roads throughout the country leading out from Kansas City, so that the farmers could bring their products to market or for shipment; churches and school houses must be built, fire engines secured and hook and ladder companies formed. A German newspaper should be established, and a "thousand other things," so the editorials ran, and the citizens as one man, were entreated to "put their shoulders to the wheel to help to build up the commercial center of mountain and prairie commerce." Every editorial was optimistic, encouraging and stimulating, and entirely free from sarcasm and bitterness.

GATHERING NEWS.

On August 17, 1858, the following message was flashed through the Ocean from Valencia, Ireland, to Trinity Bay, New Foundland: "Europe and America are united by telegraph. Glory be to God in the highest; on earth peace and good will toward men." It took three days for this message to reach Kansas City and be published. In commemoration of this great event through the untiring energy of Mr. Cyrus W. Field, the Journal of August 19, has the following in very large headlines: *Magnetic Telegraph to Boonville and by Express to Kansas City.*

What is before us? We must meet it. News from London in three days. The Great Event Completed.

One week later, the Journal announced the arrival of nine men, all miners, from the New Eldorado, with gold dust from Kansas Territory, found in the Pike's Peak Mines. For deluding the people through the columns of the Journal in regard to the gold news, at Leavenworth and St. Joseph, there was strong talk of coming to Kansas City to lynch the editor on account of his brazen audacity.

Kansas City now had 375 real estate owners within her corporate limits, and one of the local needs was a bank and a new charter for the rapidly increasing expansion of the town. A bank was soon organized, and on December 30, 1858, the New Charter, which had been framed, was adopted by a vote of 85 for and 58 against.

RAILROAD AGITATION.

To understand and to interpret public sentiment correctly in the United States since the close of the Revolution, one must bear in mind that two different sets of ideas, facing in opposite directions, have been and still are in active operation, on account chiefly of inherited tendencies and geographical influences. One

class of citizens inhabiting the Atlantic seaboard, have kept their eyes steadfastly fixed across the Atlantic as the real objective point and in connection therewith, they believed that this country would achieve its highest order of development commercially, politically, and socially by the closest possible relations with the leading nations of Western Europe. On the outer rim of this civilization, another set of ideas have colored the thoughts and feelings of a much larger class whose faces have been turned westward, and who depended almost wholly on their own individuality to achieve renown by developing their country through to the Pacific, and then by cultivating commercial relations with the nations bordering on both sides of the Pacific. When the migration from the eastern portion of our country reached Missouri, it paused for a series of years, except as the more adventurous hunters, trappers and explorers pushed far beyond the most distant outskirts of civilization. But at this period the man of all others who did more from 1833 to 1843 to bring prominently before the American people, the possibilities of the Great West, was Senator Lewis F. Linn of Missouri. In reply to Senator Duffie of South Carolina on the Oregon Bill, he used the following language: "Sir, I confess that this wealth of the surface, and the still vaster treasures that lie beneath, unmined, but not unknown, have awakened in men, and to me seem to justify, the expectations of which the Senator considered so visionary. Over such a region, the passage from the richest valley in the world—that of the Mississippi—to a new and wide commercial empire, that must presently start up on the Pacific, I can not think that railroads and canals are mere day dreams."

What was anticipated by Senator Linn just before his death was more than six years later taken up and advocated by Senator Benton. In the Senate of the United States, February 7, 1849, he spoke as follows:

"Mr. President, the bill which I propose to introduce provides for the location and construction of a national central highway from the Mississippi river to the Pacific Ocean. The idea of a communication across our part of North America is no new idea. It has belonged to every power that has ever been dominant over this part of the continent. In the year 1680, La Salle took leave of his friends at Montreal to go upon his discoveries west, the last word he uttered in parting from them was China—La Chine—and the spot has retained the name ever since.

"When the Spaniards were afterwards masters of Louisiana, the Baron de Carondelet, Governor General of that province,

with the approbation and sanction of Charles IV., undertook this great project—the discovery of a practical route across the continent by the way of the Missouri river. He employed an enterprising man (Don Jacques Clamorgan), to undertake the discovery—a great reward in land being offered to Clamorgan, and a gratuity of three thousand dollars was promised to the first man who should see the Pacific Ocean. It miscarried, although a hundred men set out upon the expedition.

The British, owning large possessions in North America, having in vain endeavored to find a northwest passage to Asia, turned their eyes inland in the hope of finding some route across the continent, and Mr. Alexander McKenzie, who was afterwards knighted for the energy and faithfulness with which he conducted an enterprise for that purpose, was the successful undertaker. He traversed the continent over that portion of it belonging to Great Britain lying in high latitudes, reached the sea, but pointed to the Columbia river as the only desirable route on the other side of the mountains; and that was the cause of all the long efforts made by the British Government, first to make the Columbia a boundary between us open to the navigation of each, and afterwards to obtain its free navigation. An inland commercial route across the continent was what she wanted.

“When we acquired Louisiana, Mr. Jefferson revived this idea of establishing an inland communication between the two sides of the continent, and for that purpose the well-known expedition of Lewis and Clark was sent out by him. Practical utility in the business of life, as well as science, was his object. To find a route to answer the purposes of a commercial communication, as well as enlarging the boundaries of geographical science, was the object; and so the instructions declared. That expedition was successful in finding a communication; Mr. Jefferson did not remain in power to carry out the practical design; and no President since his day has taken it up.

“About thirty years ago, I turned my attention to this subject, and conceived a plan for the establishment of a route extending up the Missouri river, and down the Columbia. I followed the idea of Mr. Jefferson, La Salle, and others, and I have endeavored to revive attention to their plans. The steam car was then unknown, and California was not ours; but I believed that Asiatic commerce might be brought into the valley of the Mississippi on that line, and wrote essays to support that idea. The scope of these essays was to show that Asiatic commerce had been the pursuit of all western nations, from the time of the Phoeni-

cians down to the present day—a space of three thousand years; that during all this time this commerce had been shifting its channel, and that wealth and power had followed it, and disappeared upon its loss; that one more channel was to be found—a last one, and our America has its seat; and I then expressed the confident belief that this route would certainly be established—immediately, with the aid of the American government, and eventually, even without that aid, by the progress of events and the force of circumstances. Occupied with that idea, I sought to impress it upon others. Looking to a practical issue, I sought information of the country and the mountains, from all that could give in—from the adventurous hunters and traders of the great west. Knowledge was the first object. The nature of the country—whether inhabitable or not—between the Mississippi and the Pacific—the passes in the mountains—were the great points of inquiry, and the results were most satisfactory. Inhabitable country and practical passes were vouched for; but it was not till the year 1842 that the information took the definite form which would become the basis of legislation. In the year 1842 Mr. Fremont solicited and obtained leave to extend his explorations to the South Pass of the Rocky Mountains, not for the purpose of discovering that pass, for it was done almost precisely forty years ago by the hunters, but for the purpose of fixing its locality and character. At that time it was not known whether that pass was within our territory or in Mexican Territory. Mr. Fremont, therefore, wished to extend his explorations to that pass for the purpose of ascertaining its locality and character with a view to a road to Oregon, and the increase of geographical knowledge. He was then employed on topographical duty, having just returned from two years of great labor on the upper Mississippi, assistant to the distinguished astronomer, Mr. Nicollet, who, by his great exertions during the five years that he was engaged there, brought on a prostration which ended in his death. Mr. Fremont solicited and obtained from Colonel Abert the privilege of going to the South Pass, and he made his examinations there in a way to satisfy every inquiry. His description of it was satisfactory to all minds; and the reading of that description now will show the ease with which the mountain can be passed at that place.

“August 7, 1842, we left our encampment with the rising sun. As we rose from the bed of the creek, the snow line of the mountain stretched grandly before us, the white peaks glittering in the sun. They had been hidden in the dark weather of the last few days, and it had been snowing on them while it had been raining on us. We crossed a ridge, and again struck the Sweet Water—here a beautiful swift stream, with a more open valley.

timbered with beech and cottonwood. It now began to lose itself in the many small forks which makes its head; and we continued up the main stream until near noon, when we left it a few miles, to make our noon halt on a small creek among the hills, from which the stream issues by a small opening. Within it was a beautiful grassy spot, covered with an open grove of large beech trees, among which I found several plants that I had not previously seen. The afternoon was cloudy, with squalls of rain; but the weather became fine at sunset, when we again camped on the Sweet Water, within a few miles of the South Pass. The country over which we have passed today consists principally of the compact mica slate, which crops out on all the ridges, making the uplands very rocky and slaty. In the escarpments which border the creeks, it is seen alternating with a light colored granite, at an inclination of 45 degrees. About six miles from the encampment brought us to the summit. The ascent had been so gradual, that with the intimate knowledge possessed by Carson, who had made this country his home for seventeen years, we were obliged to watch very closely to find the place at which we had reached the culminating point. From the impressions on my mind at the time (and subsequently on our return), I should compare the elevation which we surmounted at the Pass to the ascent from the avenue to the Capitol hill at Washington. The width of the Pass, or rather the width of the depression in the mountain which makes this gap in its chain, is about twenty miles, and in that width are many crossing places. Latitude (where crossed), 42 degrees, 24 minutes, 32 seconds; longitude, 109 degrees 26 minutes. Elevation above the sea, 7,490 feet. Distance from the mouth of the Kansas, by the common traveling route, 962 miles; distance from the mouth of the Great Platte, 882 miles."

AN ACTIVE FACTOR IN RAILROAD LEGISLATION.

When Colonel Van Horn came to Kansas City he was not unfamiliar with the ideas and aspirations that dominated the thoughts and feelings of the people of the West. A close student from the habitual bent of his mind and a critical and just observer of men and their motives, he adjusted himself to the new conditions as readily and easily as if he had been born and reared in this atmosphere. Besides as a newspaper man and a law student, he had not been unconscious of what the people in all parts of the United States had done and were doing, so that when he came to Western Missouri, he did not have to begin at the beginning to understand and to interpret the situation.

In the fall of 1858 a great railroad meeting had been called at Kansas City for November 22. Invitations had been sent into

Kansas Territory and into many of the counties of Western Missouri. The convention was held at the old Court House, and on the following day Mr. William Gilpin addressed this convention on the importance of building railroads and in helping to develop the resources of the mighty region lying between the British possessions on the North and the Gulf of Mexico on the South, and from the Mississippi to the Pacific on the West. No doubt Mr. Gilpin at this time was the best informed man on the topography of this entire region with the exception of Colonel Fremont of the regular army and of Kit Carson and Jim Bridger, the two great scouts.

Colonel Van Horn was a member of the committee on resolutions, and he drew the resolutions which were unanimously adopted by the convention. These resolutions urged the Congress of the United States to construct a Great Continental Railway from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean. The committee on resolutions based its action on topographical, geographical, commercial and military reasons for the undertaking of such a gigantic enterprise. They held that the Kansas River is situated on the geographical central line of the United States to the Pacific Ocean, that along its valley the grade is smaller than elsewhere across the country, that it is the most natural route along which commerce and the movement of soldiers and military supplies could be transported, and that a great continental railroad was a necessity to bind the people on the Pacific Coast to the Union, and to defend them in case of war with a foreign nation. For like reasons the doctrine was set forth that a great railroad line should be constructed from the region of the Lake of the Woods to Galveston, thus giving direct connection through Kansas City with the north and the south, and the members of this convention believed, and their speakers and resolutions indicate, that great transcontinental lines of travel and traffic would bind all sections of the American Union more firmly together. Of the ten resolutions embodied in the Committee's report one was that work should be immediately undertaken to connect Kansas City with the Hannibal and St. Joseph railroad at Cameron. This was regarded as especially desirable by the members of the convention. At this time the railroads in Missouri were the Hannibal and St. Joseph, and St. Joseph was the "big town" on the Missouri river; the Wabash from St. Louis to Macon City, called then the North Missouri Railroad; the Missouri Pacific, the first road in the state, was being pushed westward to Sedalia, which it reached a short time before the Civil War, and the Iron Mountain that ran out from St. Louis to Iron Mountain. The people along the lines of these roads and their projections were divided into two classes,

those who wanted railroads and those who opposed railroads, chiefly on account of their destroying teaming. In those days merchandise of all kinds was hauled in farm wagons from the river towns or railroad stations back into the interior, and farm products, unless consumed by the local needs of the community, were hauled to the towns or stations for sale or shipment. These early makers of Kansas City were, no doubt, the most far-seeing body of men in the Mississippi Valley. They were looking far, high and wide. Meetings had been held petitioning those in authority to hurry the Missouri Pacific into Kansas City. A railroad line had been surveyed from Independence to Kansas City, and the City Council had granted the right of way.

While in the field with his regiment in 1862, Colonel Van Horn was elected to the Missouri Senate, and during the session of the Legislature in the winter of 1864-5, he had charge of the bill for completing the Missouri Pacific Railway from Sedalia to Kansas City. He carried the measure through the Senate and with the aid of M. J. Payne and E. M. McGee, it passed the House. This was a very critical period in the history of Kansas City, and considering the circumstances under which the people of this state were then living, this was one of the most important achievements commercially and financially connected with our state history. Business was paralyzed! The people were divided—bitter, distrustful, and more than half the state had been devastated by hostile armies.

While a member of Congress, he secured the Charter for the Hannibal and St. Joseph railroad bridge, across the Missouri river at this point, and the first constructed across the Missouri river. Kansas had already become a state, and in the estimation of a majority of Senators and Congressmen, its interests would be very much more regarded than would those of Missouri; but Colonel Van Horn had always been even in territorial troubles, just in his views of the dissensions between Kansas and Missouri, yet he felt that at this juncture, the real contest for supremacy lay between Kansas City and Leavenworth. Up to this time Leavenworth was always spoken of as the coming Western Metropolis. Congressional Legislation was decisive, and it assured the supremacy of Kansas City just at this critical moment when the issue was hanging in the balance. He aided also very materially in securing legislation that provided for the building of the Kansas City, Fort Scott and Gulf Railroad, and especially in enabling the company to secure the neutral lands, now composing the counties of Crawford and Cherokee in Kansas, to aid in the construction of the road. In 1869, he introduced into Congress a bill providing for the consolidation of the Indian

tribes, and the organization of a government in that portion of the Indian Territory which formed Oklahoma. Prior to this date four years, he was a member of a delegation from Kansas City to an Indian Council at Fort Smith, Arkansas, when by treaty the right of way to build a railroad through their lands was secured. He was instrumental in carrying the measure through Congress to build the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul railway bridge across the Missouri river at this point. By public addresses, attending conventions and legislative bodies, and especially in the columns of the Journal, most intelligently and earnestly he furthered every material, commercial, intellectual and moral interest in which the people of Kansas City and the entire western country would be benefited.

IN PUBLIC OFFICE.

By nature, Colonel Van Horn preferred private life to official position. In no sense was he ever an office-seeker; yet, owing to his deep and intelligent interest in all public questions and original and practical ideas as to the means of furthering and forwarding needed legislation in order to secure definite and desirable results, he yielded to the wishes of his neighbors and friends, and was honored by them divers times. In less than two years after his removal to Kansas City, he was elected Alderman, and in 1861, he was elected Mayor, and re-elected in 1864. He served as Postmaster from 1857 to 1861, and resigned when he became Mayor. At the Presidential election in 1864, he was first elected to Congress, and was re-elected in 1866, 1868, 1880, and in 1892. In Congress he was known as one of the best working members of that body where the real work is done in committees. General Grant appointed him in 1875, Collector of Internal Revenue of the Sixth District of Missouri, and he held that position till June, 1881. He was a delegate to every National Republican Convention from 1864 to 1884, and was twice a member of the National Republican Committee, and chairman of the Republican State Committee.

HIS WAR RECORD.

Running through the files of the Journal till the explosion came in 1861, Colonel Van Horn's editorials reflect the sentiments of at least four-fifths of the people living in Missouri, namely, that after the election of Mr. Lincoln as President, some plan would be devised by which the Union would be preserved without resorting to the arbitrament of the sword. He had been a Democrat, and the Journal, during the political campaign of 1860 and prior thereto, had been a conservative Dem-

ocratic paper, opposed to the extreme sectional views of both the North and the South. In the memorable campaign of 1860, as did most of the Democratic papers of this state, the Journal supported Mr. Douglas for President. As Mayor of Kansas City in 1861, he issued a proclamation advising the citizens to go about their business and to refrain from discussing political issues which tended to stir up strife. As a Douglas Democrat, when Fort Sumpter was fired upon, he enthusiastically espoused the cause of the Union. Naturally he was looked to as the leader and consolidator of the Union Sentiment of this part of the state. One of the curious features of the development of public sentiment and the arranging of men into two hostile parties was, that in the cities and towns, the Southern sentiment was very much more pronounced, while in the country, the Union sentiment in most counties, was overwhelming. The strong Union party in Missouri was composed almost solidly of the 17,000 men who had voted for Mr. Lincoln, of a very large per cent. of the Democrats who had voted for Mr. Douglas, and almost of an equal number that had voted for Bell and Everett. Those who voted for Mr. Breckenridge for President were divided when the war came. Events moved rapidly. Men were drilling with and without arms. There were few men in the State that knew anything of the manual of arms, but nearly all the younger men and older boys were enrolled and would meet on Saturday afternoons to drill; those in the towns would meet of evenings and drill. When the President called for volunteers to suppress the insurrection, the Governor of Missouri defied the President's authority, although soldiers were volunteering and being mustered into service. The capture of Camp Jackson on the 10th of May, 1861, precipitated matters and brought the crisis to a head. The Governor soon thereafter called for 50,000 volunteers to defend Missouri. The ball was fairly opened and at it and into it, Missouri plunged. Colonel Van Horn raised a battalion of men that he commanded in 1861; it soon became a regiment. As a soldier and an officer, whether in Missouri or at the front with the Army of the Tennessee, in action or in camp, with his regiment, his conduct was that becoming a brave man and a true gentleman. He served three years in active and meritorious service in the field; but when in 1863, the famous order "No. 11" was issued by General Thomas Ewing, commanding the district of the border, with headquarters at Kansas City, the execution of this famous order created great distress and much needless suffering of many women and children, and so intense was the suffering, that many citizens implored General John M. Schofield to appoint Colonel Van Horn to conduct the deportation.

During the entire war no other officer or citizen had such a difficult and delicate duty to perform. It was a duty of the very greatest responsibility. He knew personally many of these refugees, and their pitiable condition and misfortune sank deep into his heart. Notwithstanding the service in which he had been engaged in this state, and in the South, and the further fact that in the battle of Lexington he had been severely wounded and at the battle of Corinth, while leading his regiment, his horse had been shot under him, yet in this new and trying position, as a true soldier, executed his orders with loyal submission to his superiors in command, but every act was tempered with forbearance, kindness and sympathy, and as he thought of his wife and little ones at home, he aided in every way possible to help those who had left their smoking homes behind them.

These acts of kindness were not forgotten. Some of his most pleasing recollections in the retirement of private life, are the expressions of gratitude that have come from those distressed at that time, or from their descendants and friends. Amid the din of arms such actions of tender and sympathetic regard could only come from a great and magnanimous soul. No wonder, then, that whenever Colonel Van Horn was a candidate for Congressional honors, that many Southern soldiers would vote for him because of his generosity to their wives and little ones when they were away in the field.

AS JOURNALIST AND THINKER.

There have been four great newspaper men in the United States as I now use the term, who formulated thought and moulded public opinion: George D. Prentice, whose brilliancy at this time is recognized by all who knew him personally, or in any manner since his death, have become familiar with his writings. He was a gifted genius. As a contemporary of his, but one who was his antipode, was Horace Greeley, who for years wrote those great, practical, common-sense editorials which made the New York Tribune, the greatest political force in the nation. He put in a direct, straightforward manner, the convictions of his own conscience, and no other newspaper in this country has ever carried the masses with it as did the Tribune prior to and during the Civil War. Horace Greeley tried to tell the truth, and in this fact lay the power the Tribune held over the minds and hearts of a large number of the American people. The third is Samuel Bowles, whose editorials in the Weekly Springfield Republican caused the American nation to pause and reflect. He grasped great questions, and he handled them as a giant would take up puny things and toss them about.

viewing them on every side as they were hurled through the air.

Colonel Van Horn is the fourth in this line. His editorials were put in strong, vigorous English, expressed in simple language. The thought was always bigger than the words that carried the thought, and better than Prentice, Greeley or Bowles, his illustrations were always drawn from simple and familiar objects better adapted to the capacity of the mass of readers than the others employed, although Horace Greeley approached him the nearest in the use of language as an instrument to convey thought. This represents only one side of Colonel Van Horn's many-sided character. There has never been a man in the State of Missouri, or perhaps in the United States, certainly no one that I have ever read after or knew personally, that knew our public political men better than he knew them. Blessed with a retentive memory, a keen and discriminating analysis of human nature and the motives that play upon it, he is one of the best informed men in this particular line that our country has ever produced. At no time have I ever asked him about any one of our public men either of the present or of its past political history, that he has ever hesitated for a moment in giving a correct estimate of his ability and character. His mind is simply encyclopaedic. His newspaper experience and public life fitted him completely for accumulating and massing information which he has arranged, digested and classified with wonderful skill. Three references only in this connection will be sufficient. In December he called at my office and we were conversing on general topics in no prearranged manner, and I said: "Colonel, who is the greatest man now in the United States Senate?" Without a moment's hesitation, he replied: "Morgan of Alabama. When he first went to the Senate, some of the old members thought he talked too much; but he is one of those fellows who always studies, and he knows what is going to be done and what has been done, and his mind moves in the biggest orbit there is in the Senate. He is never idle."

Several years ago, during a conversation, Carl Schurz's name was mentioned and I remarked: "Colonel, how do you account for Carl Schurz boxing the political compass so often?" "Carl Schurz," said he, "was a born revolutionist. As soon as he was old enough, he plunged into a revolution, and he has kept at that business ever since. He is built that way."

A HISTORIC CHARACTER—PROPHECY.

Colonel Van Horn, writing an "editorial correspondence" from Jefferson City, gives the following estimate of Hon. Charles D. Drake, who, six years later was known as the author of the

"Drake Constitution" of Missouri: "December 20, 1859, was as predicted, consumed by Mr. Drake with his Sunday Bill, and for want of a subject, I may as well notice this gentleman. He came here with a reputation preceding him, that better legislators have employed years to obtain. But it has not been sustained. He is a man of talent, as well as a man of fine acquirements—an excellent speaker, and a fine debator, but he is entirely a book man, an office legislator, and totally devoid of popular sympathy, or popular education. He seems to be insensible to the reflection that there can be any diversity of opinion, except upon the supposition that all save his own is unsound and false. He has but two words in his vocabulary—orthodoxy and heresy. It is this tone of mind that has been the source of the Sunday Bill. I believe fully that the man is sincere and conscientious in his advocacy of it, but his sincerity arises from the fact, that his natural intellectual proclivities are Puritanical. I believe that he is competent to stand and see passing before his eyes, day after day, a practical refutation of his dogma, without being aware of the fact that he might be mistaken. He is the worst possible man to whom any bill affecting morality or practices, affecting in any manner questions of conscience, could be entrusted. He is already looked upon as constituting a complete state, a complete church, and a complete system of social economy, within himself. He always speaks of the country as the rural districts, and seems to think that city sense is of a more sublimated and ethereal character than that which comes from the corn-fields of the state. Perhaps it is so, but it is not calculated to advance the influence of Mr. Drake in the House, to let it be known that he feels so. Unfortunately, a large majority of the Legislators are from the rural districts."

Prior to his being elected to the Legislature, Hon. Charles D. Drake, was favorably known to the legal profession by his work on "Attachments," which was for years the standard authority. But the analysis of his character more than six years before he came into prominence in the state, shows how well Colonel Van Horn then measured men. This is a better description of Senator's Drake's mental peculiarities than I have ever seen elsewhere in print.

A SENSE OF HUMOR.

There is a very strong sense of humor in Colonel Van Horn's nature. An incident or two will illustrate.

VOICE OF THE PEOPLE.

The following extracts and comments appeared in the Journal January 28, 1860: "We trust our readers will pardon us for

the amiable vanity that compels us to clip the following from our exchanges:

"R. T. Van Horn is a true Democrat, a man who is identified with the interests of Missouri and Jackson County, and who has done hard work and noble services in defense of that party. As we said last week, we said we were for Van against the world, provided he receives the nomination.—Independence Gazette."

"R. T. Van Horn, Editor of the Journal, is announced as a candidate for the Legislature." Go it, Van, "we'll hold your hat."—Kansas City Metropolitan.

COMMENTS.

"Such is fame, glory, renown, and what the poets call living in history. That phantom makes patriots, conspirators, heroes and martyrs. It is the first toot of the horn of the coy goddess that unstrings the nerves, and sends the hot blood surging through the veins. A great thing is this *vox populi*."

PERSONAL ACQUAINTANCE OF COLONEL VAN HORN.

Before I came to Kansas City in August, 1874, I had read considerably of Col. Van Horn in an official capacity. From what information I possessed, no hint had been given me touching his mental characteristics or his personal appearance. The newspapers had been strangely silent. Soon after my arrival here, Hon. J. V. C. Karnes said to me,—“I want you to meet Colonel Van Horn of the *Journal of Commerce*.” The *Journal* office was on Fifth Street, between Main and Delaware. We went into a back room, called the editorial room, and there sat Colonel Van Horn in his shirt sleeves. We talked probably fifteen minutes, and when I started to go, he said: “Greenwood, I like you. The columns of the *Journal* are open to you. Write on any subject you please, except Democracy. It would not look well in a Republican paper, you know.” We both laughed, and I thanked him. Here was a stout built man, rather ruddy complexion, about five feet ten inches in height, weight perhaps two hundred pounds, eyes between a light blue and a steel gray, hair and beard which were short, nearly reddish brown, slightly tinged with gray, a high, broad, square forehead, a Grecian nose, a wide mouth, firmly set jaws, a chin that set off well the forehead, eyes, nose, mouth. The whole cast of countenance bespoke kindness, persistence, and determination most happily blended. One’s life is reflected in the sphere of little things perhaps more than in great events; the one springing up, involuntarily without much if any forethought, and the other as

the resultant of prolonged investigation and deliberation. The one has its origin in the heart, is the natural impulse of the feelings intuitively expressed,—and the other the cold calculation of the intellect with the emotions eliminated. It is from both these view points I shall consider the essential features of Colonel Van Horn's character.

At this time he was interested in the writings of Darwin, Huxley, Spencer, Wallace, Cope, Hackel, and others who were thinking along these lines, but his mind was equally active in a dozen or more different directions. Whenever I would go into the Journal office, or meet him on the street, we discussed the writings of the men who were the advanced thinkers of the age, and we talked of the best books either had recently read. Another theme that formed many conversations was the Vortex theory of the formation of the Universe, as outlined by Descartes, which he employed to explain the motions of the planets. It was indeed a matter of great pleasure to spend an hour or two each week in the company of one whose conversations were always along such broad lines, entirely divorced from personal gossip and commonplace platitudes. The highest and the best thinking then, so far as I knew, in Kansas City, was done by Colonel Van Horn and Dr. J. G. Roberts, pastor of the First Congregational Church. Another subject that received considerable attention was the "Race of Mound Builders," and who they were, and did they represent a phase of semi-civilization that had been swept away by the North American Indians. Every Sunday, and for years afterwards, the Sunday Journal would contain a leading editorial on some great subject of scientific, sociological, metaphysical, religious, or literary interest, setting forth some new doctrine or opinion. There was not a newspaper in New York, Boston, Chicago, or St. Louis that had the reputation that the *Journal* then sustained on Sunday editorials, and these editorials were copied far and wide in many of the leading newspapers of the country. Those who did not know the Colonel personally, would write letters complimenting the "Religious Editor of the *Journal*" for his great and thoughtful contributions. These letters came from all parts of the country and many of them I read.

Occasionally the Colonel would speak of the policy he had marked out for the Journal, and to which he severely adhered. One day I happened in, someone was relating an incident that bordered on the coarse. Colonel Van Horn said: "We sometimes hear such things here in the office, but they never get into the columns of the Journal. I publish a paper for the fireside, where the whole family can read it and not bring a blush to the

cheek of any woman or girl." This policy explains why it was that Democratic families as well as all the Republican families in Kansas City read the *Journal*. It was a clean family paper, though a strong political paper.

When General John S. Phelps was the Democratic candidate for Governor of the State, a story was put into circulation in one of the St. Louis papers reflecting on his private character, and many of the country papers reprinted it with comments; but the Kansas City *Journal* kept silent. One day in conversation with the Colonel, I said: "Colonel, the *Journal* has not printed anything about General Phelps." This was his characteristic reply: "I know General Phelps intimately. We are warm personal friends, and we have known each other for many years. That story is a lie, and not one word of it shall be printed in the *Journal*." At the election, General Phelps was elected by a large majority, and on Saturday, just before the Governor was to be inaugurated, I went into the editorial room of the *Journal*, and the Colonel said, "Sit down and let us swap a few lies." A familiar way he had of asking a person to talk with him a while. While we were swapping, an ex-confederate soldier came in, and he wished to speak with the Colonel privately. The Colonel shook his hand very cordially, but at the same time he asked me to remain. This ex-confederate was a Democrat, and he wanted a letter from Colonel Van Horn to Governor Phelps, recommending him for a position. The credential was given, and after the man went out, the Colonel said: "It may seem strange to you that this man would come to me for a letter to the Governor, but I told him he had better not let the other Democratic candidates know that he had it, but he could show it to the Governor." During this conversation he told me that he had never betrayed a political confidence in his life, and that was the rule he had adopted early in life. Information given in secrecy was inviolate.

It may be interesting to mention how the Colonel wrote editorials for the *Journal*. He wrote usually in the forenoon at his desk, using a very fine pointed lead pencil. I noticed in the waste basket many times a very delicate hand writing on soft paper, and I was puzzled for a while to understand what woman about the *Journal* office wrote such a small hand, the words crowded closely together. One day as I was sitting there, I noticed an editorial which had not been sent to the compositor, and it explained the mystery. When writing with pen and ink, he wrote a large bold hand, but when for the press or an address, he wrote a fine delicate hand, and he said that he could not think well unless he so wrote.

I have never known a man simpler in his habits. After writing his editorials and while waiting to read the proof, he would eat his dinner, which in the earlier days when I first knew him, consisted of light bread or crackers, and "dried buffalo beef." Many a time have I seen him dining on this plain, but substantial mid-day meal. After reading his proof he would go home, frequently buying something for the family as he passed a grocery store and carry it home. Once I overtook him on Main Street, between Ninth and Tenth Streets, carrying two dressed turkeys and a paper bundle; his hat was far back on his head, and we both burst out into a hearty laugh; but he said: "I have salted down two fat hogs and we have two barrels of good winter apples and a good supply of fuel, and we are getting pretty well fixed up for the winter."

A SCARED REGIMENT.

On one occasion we were talking about the different kinds of snakes in this country. "Well," said the Colonel, "the funniest panic I ever experienced was in 1862, during the siege of Corinth. One evening my regiment was ordered to take an advanced position after dark in the brush very near to the confederate line, so as to attack at daylight the next morning. The men took position, and were lying on their arms in line of battle. Soon after dark it began a slow rain, and after lying there very quietly for an hour or two, one of my men said: "I smell a rattlesnake," and the rumor spread along the entire line, and despite the entreaties of all the officers, the regiment broke and fled. The soldiers said they would fight rebels anywhere, but they would not stay among rattlesnakes in the dark."

HIS IDEALS.

There is neither inspiration nor aspiration in the life that is not moved by a great ideal. The greatest earthly ideal is that of true friendship in which confidence is never lost or debased.

Owing to this fact, the name of Colonel Van Horn is deeply engraved on the hearts of thousands of men and women who knew him in the early struggles, trials and triumphs of Kansas City. By every one he was known and esteemed as an honest, sympathetic and public spirited citizen. His every-day life so simple, unpretending and democratic, the great commoner of Missouri, brought him into close touch with all classes. He understood their thoughts, feelings and aspirations far better than the ones who stood aloof. A statesman, a philosopher, a scholar and a thinker, his mind moved in an ever

widening circle of knowledge. It was trained by a long and powerful system of analysis, so that it worked with the precision of a splendid piece of machinery.

Indissolubly connected with Kansas City, its rise, its progress, and its destiny, is the name of Colonel Robert Thompson Van Horn, whose public service and private virtues belong to this nation as one of its great historic characters.

At the conclusion of the paper several citizens made short addresses.

Judge H. C. McDougal said:

Mr. President and Friends:

I have long been proud of the Kansas City Spirit, which says and does things at the right time and in the right way. I am prouder of that spirit now than ever before, for it has here brought together so many representative men and women of this city to pay tribute to a venerable living friend whom we all respect, honor and love. But I am proudest of all tonight that I enjoy the personal friendship of our distinguished guest of honor, Colonel R. T. Van Horn.

I have known him ever since I became a citizen of Missouri, nearly forty years ago. Our first bond of sympathy grew out of the fact that we had been soldiers of the Union in the Civil War and were members of the same political party. The passing years brought us closer together and each year has served to increase my admiration for the man—for his vast knowledge, profound wisdom, wonderful achievements, kindness of heart, simplicity of manner, his humanity—until tonight this big, brave, brainy, far-sighted, many-sided man appeals to me as a very giant in intellect and manly manhood.

In the days and years that are gone, I have had many long heart to heart talks with Col. Van Horn and at the close of each have known that I not only knew more, but that I was a better man than when that talk commenced. And if I had that faith, hope and belief of immortality, so soothing to many of my betters, one of the anticipated delights of the mystic life beyond the River would be that I might there, as here, again meet, greet and commune with my friend, in and through all the days, weeks, months, years, centuries and cycles yet to be.

I believe in, and have practiced, the sentiment expressed by the poet in the lines:

Oh, friends, I pray, tonight,
Keep not your kisses for my dead, cold brow;
The way is lonely; let me feel them now.

* * * * *

When dreamless rest is mine I shall not need
The tenderness for which I long tonight.

And when a friend has either said or done a good thing, I have not waited to speak of it over his or her grave, but taken that friend by the hand and, face to face, expressed my grateful appreciation. Hence I am glad to be present tonight, to pay my tribute of personal respect to the journalist, soldier, statesman, sage, philosopher and friend, who for half a century has been the most useful citizen of Kansas City, as he today is easily our foremost citizen. And having him here at a disadvantage, I repeat to his face what I have so often said behind his back:

That the time will come when the rising generation will say with pleasure and pride "I knew Col. R. T. Van Horn personally," just as we of the passing generation proudly say "I knew Abraham Lincoln."

When the long, busy, useful and beautifully blameless life of our beloved friend shall have closed—which the gods grant may be many years hence—then it may well be said of him, as the gifted John Boyle O'Reilly said of his ideal man:

And how did he live, that dead man there,
In the country churchyard laid?
O, he? He came for the sweet field air.
He ruled no serfs and he knew no pride
He was one with the workers side by side.
For the youth he mourned with an endless pity
Who were cast like snow on the streets of the city.
He was weak, maybe; but he lost no friend;
Who loved him once, loved on to the end.
He mourned all selfish and shrewd endeavor;
But he never injured a weak one—never.
When censure was passed, he was kindly dumb;
He was never so wise but a fault would come;
He was never so old that he failed to enjoy
The games and the dreams he had loved when a boy.
He erred, and was sorry; but never drew
A trusting heart from the pure and true.
When friends look back from the years to be,
God grant they may say such things of me.

Colonel R. H. Hunt said:

The early history of our city is fraught with great importance to us. The swift changes of the last decade are rapidly passing into forgetfulness. Therefore, I am glad that Dr. Greenwood and others are rescuing the records of a few of the important incidents that were the factors in our growth. And I have been familiar with the history of our city since 1859. In fact, I have been a pupil of Van Horn's as I have been a constant reader of the Journal since 1864. Turning points in the growth of our city were: 1st, the securing of the Missouri Pacific; 2nd, of the Cameron Road, now the C. B. & Q.; 3rd, of the North Missouri, now the Wabash, and the Fort Scott and Memphis, now the Frisco; 4th, of the Kansas Pacific, now the Union Pacific—I only mention these roads which Van Horn was largely instrumental in bringing into our city. Notwithstanding, we were naturally a railroad center, it was a constant struggle, as our rivals had control of legislation. We had to fight at every point. There were a few men, whose courage and nerve ought to win the admiration of our people, who knew the facts, but the one through whom they did the work,—their right-hand so to speak—was Van Horn, who enthused the people to vote aid. As the agent in conventions securing legislation, in Congress, everywhere, he was the agent. To illustrate, it was sought to run the Missouri Pacific from Warrensburg or Pleasant Hill due west to the State Line. The same thing was attempted by the North Missouri, now the Wabash; by way of Clay County Bluffs to Leavenworth, leaving our city out in the cold. These schemes were approved by lobby efforts only. Until 1862 Col. Van Horn was with his regiment in the field (where he was wounded). He was elected to the State Senate and McGerand and Payne to the lower house. On

taking his seat, the Colonel was placed in charge of the bill for the building of the Missouri Pacific, and with the aid of his associates, Kansas City became the terminus. The North Missouri, to get what legislation it wanted, was too glad to build to this city. Before this the Cameron road had been started but abandoned, and here dates one of these important events in the destiny of our city. The road to Cameron was now sought to be revived. The war had made Kansas City a mere military post and correspondingly helped Leavenworth, Atchison and St. Joseph. The proprietors of the Hannibal were the owners of the Cameron, which was merely a branch. It was known that Hayward the Superintendent of the Hannibal had transferred his affections from Kansas City to Leavenworth and was using all his power to divert the road to that city. The Cameron directory was organized, who went to Detroit to see Joy, the President of the C. B. & Q., where they met parties from Leavenworth on a similar errand. The result was that the Boston people made this condition: that, before they would decide, the right to bridge the Missouri should be secured from Congress. Colonel Van Horn, being in Congress, was telegraphed to, asking him to secure legislation. Now commonly this is the work of a session of Congress, but with the energy, tact and zeal that has always characterized his action when our city was in the scale, he took advantage of an incident that fortunately just then occurred. A committee had reported a bill to bridge the Mississippi at Quincy, and the bill was the special order. The first thing Van Horn did was to draw an amendment to the Quincy bill, authorizing a bridge at Kansas City and got the consent of the chairman of the committee to introduce it, and the bill was passed. And here I want to relate an incident, that shows how small a margin sometimes controls great events.

Whilst the Colonel was on the floor offering his amendment, Sidney Clark, member from Kansas, came in and hearing it read, rushed to his desk to write an amendment for a bridge at Leavenworth, but, before he could propose it, the previous question was asked for and carried. Now I want to impress upon you that this bridge was the turning point. Yes, the chief factor in settling the status of Kansas City over her rivals—and we owe this consummation almost exclusively to our worthy and beloved citizen, Colonel R. T. Van Horn.

I am gratified in having this opportunity to present these pungent facts to you in the presence of the Colonel who has deserved his title in war as well as his rank as the first citizen of Kansas City for whom there ought to be a monument erected and placed on one of the most conspicuous places in the city.

The following distinguished citizens spoke briefly of Colonel Van Horn's character and work in Kansas City: General Milton Moore, Judge J. V. C. Karnes, Colonel J. S. Botsford, Colonel L. H. Waters, and Rev. Father William J. Dalton.

Colonel Van Horn responded to the eulogies by thanking Mr. Greenwood especially for the allusion to Mrs. Van Horn to which he replied:

"One of the secrets in public life is the assurance that home needs no attention on your part."

Mrs. Van Horn was compelled to rise in response to applause, and the audience rose in compliment to her.

On motion of Prof. S. A. Underwood, the club decided to publish in pamphlet form Prof. Greenwood's address and other facts concerning Colonel Van Horn, and distribute them in the public and parochial schools of Kansas City.

0208 E5

29 Aug 45



